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Fourth Edition

STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION OF MONTANA SCHOOLS

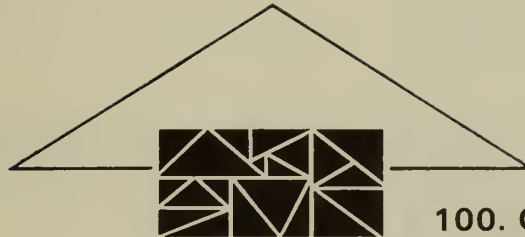
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100. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Minimum

Recommended

101. Accreditation Period

- (1) Public and nonpublic schools are considered for accreditation by the board of public education in March prior to the adoption of their preliminary budgets for the ensuing school year. Recommendations for accreditation are determined by analyses of fall reports, other reports and visitation observations by supervisory personnel from the office of public instruction.
- (2) Schools meeting most of the recommended standards may receive consideration for accreditation for a period of up to five years by making application to the state superintendent and by completing a self-evaluation to be followed by a team visitation to review and appraise the school. Schools may coordinate this latter phase with the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges to avoid duplication of team visitations by that association and the state superintendent's staff.
- (3) By authority of section 20-7-102, MCA, and on the recommendation of the superintendent of public instruction, the board of public education historically has established the accreditation status of each Montana public elementary and secondary school in March of each year. Annual accreditation, therefore, occurs prior to school districts' adoption of preliminary budgets for the ensuing year and yet allows a period of time

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for analysis of the information on which accreditation recommendations are based. The information gathering and processing schedule commences at the beginning of the school year for which accreditation is sought and is based primarily on data provided by school districts supplemented by visitations and/or inquiries initiated by the superintendent of public instruction.

- (4) It is the policy of the board of public education not to act on school accreditation in the interim between annual accreditation determinations. It is the consensus of the board that the established annual schedule provides ample opportunity both to schools and to the superintendent to prepare for annual accreditation.
- (5) Once annual accreditation has been established by the board any request from a school district for consideration of a change in its accreditation status will be entertained by the board only if it can be shown that an error occurred in reporting, interpreting or processing the data on which accreditation recommendations had been based.
- (6) This policy reaffirms the board's basic belief in school districts' responsibility for filing and updating any information pertinent to the accreditation process.

Recommended

102. Categories of Accreditation

- (1) "Regular accreditation" is awarded for a school which meets minimum standards or shows deviations from standards of a minor nature. Regular accreditation is for one year.
- (2) "Accredited with advice" will be noted when a school exhibits serious and/or numerous deviations from minimum standards; improvement is expected within the ensuing school year.
- (3) "Accredited on probation" will be noted when a school exhibits or continues to have serious and/or numerous deviations from standards or has substantially increased the seriousness of deviations over the previous year. The local school board and other administrative officers must adopt and submit a

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school improvement plan to the superintendent of public instruction. This plan must provide a systematic procedure for the correction of infractions noted.

- (4) A school which fails to have improved after having been accredited with advice or accredited on probation will not be accredited.

Recommended

103. Certificate of Accreditation

- (1) A certificate of accreditation will be issued to each accredited school.

105. Types of Schools

- (1) An elementary school is an organizational unit composed of any combination of grades K through eight.
- (2) A middle school is an organizational unit composed of any combination of grades four through eight. (Note: All portions of the middle school organization and program composed of grade six and lower shall comply with standards for accreditation applicable to elementary schools.)
- (3) A junior high school is an organizational unit composed of grades seven, eight and nine operating in conjunction with a senior high school and an elementary school.
- (4) A high school is an organizational unit composed of any of the combinations which follow:
 - (a) Senior high school: grades 10-12 operating in conjunction with a junior high school and an elementary school.
 - (b) Six-year high school: grades 7-12 operating in conjunction with an elementary school as per 20-6-501, MCA.
 - (c) Four-year high school: grades 9-12 operating in conjunction with an elementary school.

106. Approval of New Schools

- (1) To be eligible for accreditation, new junior high schools or high schools must be approved by the superintendent of public instruction prior to their establishment.

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Recommended

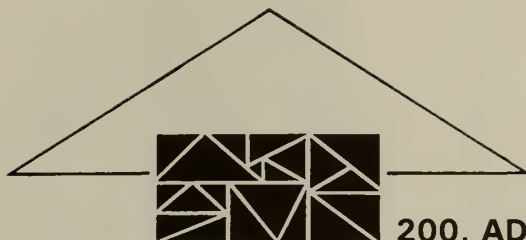
- (2) A school operating for the first time or a school which was not in operation the previous year must comply with statutory requirements for the opening of a new school or the reopening of a closed school prior to such opening or reopening.

107. School Specialists

- (1) Specialists, paraprofessionals and teacher aides employed in a school will be considered in the evaluation of the entire school program for accreditation purposes. In cases where class enrollment is in excess of minimum standards, consideration will be given in determining the severity of deviation for those schools employing specialists, paraprofessionals and teacher aides.

108. Alternative Standards

- (1) Any school or school district may apply to the board of public education through the office of public instruction for permission to use an alternate for any standard, section of standards or the entire set of standards. To do so, the school district should indicate the educational goals or values that the current standard should provide students, then how the alternate being applied for would provide the same or improved goals or values. Permission to use an approved alternate would be granted for one year and renewable if the one-year pilot is evaluated to be workable and educationally sound by both the school or school district and the board of public education.



200. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

Under Montana school law, a local board of trustees is charged with the leadership, control and final decision-making powers of the school district. In fulfilling these responsibilities, the board works closely with the district's administrative, supervisory and instructional staff.

The advisory and policy-making activities of the board and administrators must be guided by a comprehensive philosophy which considers the function and the powers of the district, the duties and responsibilities of district staff and the goals of public education.

Because this philosophy should be a foundation for all of the educational activity of the district, it cannot be formulated by the board or administrative staff alone. The board of trustees, district administrators, teachers, students, their parents and the general community must be involved in determining the basic philosophy on which the educational program will be built. Once a philosophy is established, certain goals and objectives for the school program can be specified.

Each district also must define its operational policies and make them available to employees and patrons of the district so that everyone affected may be aware of the governing regulations.

The district superintendent serves as the executive officer of the board of trustees. One of the chief responsibilities is to translate board policy and directives into an operating educational program. The superintendent serves as a link between the board and the school, providing input and feedback both to the trustees and to school personnel and patrons.

The superintendent also has direct responsibility to oversee the district's instructional program. Instructional staff, principals, curriculum specialists and guidance personnel assist the superintendent in the supervision, evaluation and development of a thorough educational program.

Members of the administrative and supervisory staff should be persons of proven academic achievement and educational experience and should demonstrate effective leadership and communication skills.

Administrative and supervisory personnel also need time to provide more than routine inspection of the teachers under their supervision. Each teacher is entitled to continuous observation and individual follow-up conferences designed to improve the quality of instruction. For this reason, the standards recommend that administrative and supervisory personnel devote a major portion of their time to approaches to meet the needs of each student.

200. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

Minimum

Recommended

202. Board of Trustees

- (1) Boards shall conduct regular monthly meetings and keep records in accordance with state law.
- (2) Each school district shall formulate a written comprehensive philosophy of education which reflects the needs of students, and a statement of goals which describes the district's particular philosophy. The school district shall publicize the availability of such statements so that persons so wishing may secure a copy, and such statement shall be reviewed annually by each school district and revised as deemed necessary.
- (3) Each school district shall have written policies which delineate the responsibilities of the board, the superintendent and personnel employed by the school district. Policies will be reviewed annually by the school district and will be available to employees and patrons of the school.
- (4) Each school district shall have valid, written contracts with all regularly employed certified administrative, supervisory and teaching personnel.
- (5) Each school district shall schedule a school term consisting of at least 180 days, Monday through Friday, in accordance with state law. A Saturday may not count as an instructional day unless it is used as a make-up day when an emergency has closed school during the regular school week. In such emergencies, approval for holding school on a Saturday must be obtained from the superintendent of public instruction except where an emergency is of one day's duration and is to be made up on Saturday of the same week, in which instance the district or county superintendent may approve the Saturday make-up day.

The board of public education recommends that a self-evaluation of the district's educational program shall be conducted every five years using the National Study of School Evaluation Evaluative Criteria or some other means of self-evaluation. Following the self-evaluation, schools are encouraged to utilize a visitation team of educators, students, trustees and lay citizens to validate the school's self-evaluation once every ten years.

A district's philosophy may include the community education process which encourages the development of a comprehensive delivery system, based on local citizen involvement, greater utilization of school-community facilities and resources, inter-agency coordination, and improved school-community relations, in order to provide for the educational, recreational, social and cultural needs of all community members.

200. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

Minimum

- (6) The board of trustees shall transact official business with professional personnel and other employees through the district superintendent of schools except as provided in section 39-31-101 through 39-31-304 of state law.
- (7) The board of trustees shall adopt specific policies and procedures for evaluation of certified staff. A comprehensive individual personnel file based on specific evaluation of every teacher, principal, supervisor and other certified staff employed in the district shall be maintained. The individual being evaluated shall be provided with a copy of the written evaluation and shall be granted access to his/her evaluation file.

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that policies and procedures shall be developed in consultation with administrators, teachers, other staff members and students. Also teachers, administrators and pupils should have the opportunity to comment on the evaluation of these policies and procedures.

203. District Superintendent

- (1) Each school district operating both an elementary school and a high school must have a superintendent who shall be certified in accordance with state law statutes and with the policies of the board of public education.
- (2) The district superintendent shall be responsible for the selection and assignment of all school employees and for the administration and supervision of the educational program, subject to the approval of the board of trustees.

204. Principal

- (1) The principal shall be certified in accordance with state statutes and with the policies of the board of public education.
- (2) Requirements for the services of principals are determined by enrollments of schools or school districts.
 - (a) Any school with an enrollment of fewer than 150 students and not under the supervision of a district superintendent shall provide for supervision at the minimum average of two days per teacher per year either through the office of the county superintendent or through the shared services of elementary principals, subject area consultants and/or curriculum consultants.

The board of public education recommends that any school with an enrollment of fewer than 150 students and not under the supervision of a district superintendent shall provide for supervision at the minimum average of one-half day per teacher per month either through the office of the county superintendent or through the shared services of elementary principals, subject area consultants and/or curriculum consultants.

200. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

Minimum

- (b) In any school district with a combined elementary and secondary enrollment of more than 50 but less than 150 students and where the superintendent serves as both elementary and secondary principal, the superintendent shall devote half time to administration and supervision in both schools.
- (c) In any school district where the combined elementary and secondary enrollment exceeds 150 but is less than 300, the superintendent may serve as half-time elementary or high school principal. The district must employ a half time elementary or high school principal for the other unit in the district. The superintendent shall devote half-time as principal of the assigned school. Or, in any school district where the combined elementary and secondary enrollment exceeds 150 but is less than 300, and where the superintendent serves as both elementary and secondary principal, the district must employ a half-time administrative assistant. The administrative assistant shall be defined as a person who holds a bachelor's degree and presents evidence of working toward the administrator's certificate on a planned program to be completed within five years of first assignment. The administrative assistant shall not supervise or evaluate staff or curriculum.
- (d) Any elementary or secondary school with an enrollment of 150 to 300 shall employ a principal (in addition to the superintendent) who shall devote half time to supervision and administration.
- (e) Any school with an enrollment exceeding 300 shall employ a principal (in addition to the superintendent) who shall devote full time to supervision and administration.
- (f) Any junior or senior high school with an enrollment of over 500 students shall employ an assistant principal who shall devote at least one half of each school day to supervision and administration.

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that in any school district where the combined enrollment exceeds 150 but is less than 300, the district shall employ both an elementary principal and a high school principal (in addition to the superintendent) who shall devote at least one half of each school day to supervision and administration.

The board of public education recommends that any school with an enrollment exceeding 300 shall employ a full-time principal for a length of time that includes supervision and administration of pre- and post-school year activities.

200. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

Minimum

- (g) Any elementary school with an enrollment of over 650 students shall employ an assistant principal who shall devote at least one half of each school day to supervision and administration.

205. Supervisory and Administrative Time

- (1) Supervision and administration shall include a continuous inservice program for the improvement of instruction. A minimum inservice program shall consist of monthly meetings of staff devoted to instructional improvement. Teachers, supervisors and administrators shall plan together the inservice programs for curriculum development and/or instructional planning.

207. Student Records

- (1) Each school shall keep a permanent file of students' records which shall include the name and address of the student, parent or guardian, birth date, academic work completed, level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement tests), immunization record as per 20-5-406, MCA, and attendance data of the student. Student records shall be kept in a fireproof file or vault in the school building or for rural schools, in the county superintendent's office. Each school district shall establish policies and procedures for the use and transfer of student records which are in compliance with state and federal laws which assure that an individual's privacy is respected.
- (2) All inactive records from a school that closes shall be sent to the county superintendent or the appropriate county official.

209. Standard School Day

- (1) As provided in section 20-1-302, MCA, "A school day of pupil instruction shall be at least two hours for kindergartens and all other preschool programs, unless a variance has

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that any elementary school with an enrollment of over 500 students shall employ an assistant principal who shall devote at least one half of each school day to supervision and administration.

The board of public education recommends that any district which has more than one secondary school (junior and/or senior high school) assign a secondary school curriculum coordinator for the instructional program. The coordinator may be one of the principals and should hold a Class 3 certificate endorsed for supervisor of secondary curriculum.

A district employing two or more elementary principals should assign a coordinator for the instructional program. The coordinator may be one of the principals and should hold a Class 3 certificate endorsed for supervisor of elementary curriculum.

200. ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

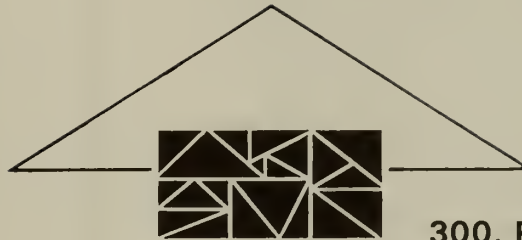
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been granted by the superintendent of public instruction in accordance with the policies of the board of public education, at least four hours for grades one through three, and at least six hours for grades four through 12. The number of hours in any one school day for grades four through 12 may be reduced by one hour if the total number of hours in the school week is not less than 30 hours. The number of hours in a school week may be reduced, in an emergency, with the approval of the board of public education." (Note: See section 20-9-312, MCA, for eleventh and twelfth grade exceptions.)

Recommended

210. School Morale

Cooperative and harmonious relationships among staff members, students, trustees, parents and patrons will contribute to a positive school atmosphere and general morale. The board of public education recommends that boards of trustees carefully examine excessive teacher turnover and lack of administrative continuity as they may indicate deficiencies in school morale.



300. PERSONNEL

Teacher certification, as required by Montana statutes, serves a dual purpose. First, certification procedures seek to assure the student, parents and the community of well-prepared teachers. Second, certification standards contribute to the professional growth of teachers by requiring them to continue training through advanced study.

If students are to be able to compete in today's complex society, they must have access to a large body of knowledge and must be able to utilize sophisticated learning techniques. Accreditation standards require that high schools shall employ at least four certified teachers or certified full-time equivalents in addition to the principal and superintendent. The standards also require that teachers be assigned on the basis of level of certificate, endorsement(s) and college preparation.

The quality of classroom instruction also is determined by several other factors. To make the best use of teacher's talents, released time is required to develop lesson plans, to engage in research and to participate in training sessions. The standards, recognizing this need, limit the teaching load for a teacher to 28 hours per week except for one- and two-teacher rural schools.

Class load also affects the quality of classroom instruction. The standards prescribe maximum individual class size for grade levels and, at the secondary level, for particular kinds of classes. In addition to limiting class loads, the standards encourage schools to use para-professional assistance in the classroom.

Qualifications of auxiliary personnel—school nurses, social workers, speech therapists and psychologists—are not outlined in the accreditation standards. It is expected, however, that such personnel be hired on the basis of professional training, experience and knowledge.

Differentiated staffing and other staffing procedures that involve the utilization of teaching personnel to make optimum use of their talents, interests and commitments are encouraged. Differentiated staffing can include utilizing classroom teachers at different levels of training and competency, subject matter specialists, special service personnel, community resource persons and para-professionals such as teacher interns and teacher aides.

300. PERSONNEL

Minimum

Recommended

302. Certificates

- (1) All teachers shall hold valid Montana teaching certificates. Also, administrative personnel who teach shall hold teaching certificates. All supervisory personnel shall hold appropriate certificates. The term "all teachers" shall be interpreted to include teachers involved in the classroom instructional activities of any federally financed program or project. An emergency authorization of employment is not a valid certificate; it is granted to a district which, under emergency conditions, cannot secure the services of a certified teacher. Neither study hall supervisors nor teacher aides need to be certified; however, an instructional aide assigned to a classroom shall be under the direct supervision of that classroom's teacher.
- (2) All personnel coaching intramural or interscholastic athletics shall have successfully completed a course in first aid.
- (3) In accordance with state law, salary shall be withheld from teachers who have not registered their certificates in the office of the county superintendent within 60 calendar days after their term of service begins.
- (4) All teachers shall file official transcripts of all college work in the office of their chief school administrator. If there is no district superintendent or principal, the county superintendent is the chief school administrator.

The board of public education recommends that all certified personnel should have first aid training.

303. Teaching Assignments

- (1) Teachers shall be assigned at the levels and in the subjects for which their certificates are endorsed. *Exception:* Teachers assigned in grade 7 or 8 who hold a secondary certificate may teach in subject areas for which they hold no endorsement if they have 15 quarter (10 semester) credits of preparation in the assigned subject area. The 15 credits shall include a methods course in the teaching of that subject area appropriate to the grade levels.

300. PERSONNEL

Minimum

- (2) Teachers holding certificates endorsed for general subject fields (e.g., general science or social sciences) shall have 15 quarter (10 semester) credits of preparation in any specific subject taught within the general area.
- (3) Teachers in state-approved junior high schools shall hold valid Montana teacher certificates endorsed for appropriate levels and subjects. Certification at the elementary level based on a bachelor's degree entitles the holder to teach in grades kindergarten through nine. Teachers with such certification shall have a minimum of 30 quarter (20 semester) credits in all subjects which they teach at the ninth grade level.
- (4) Teachers assigned to teach reading skills or remedial reading shall have one of the following certification endorsements: a) elementary education, b) an endorsement in reading, c) an endorsement in English with at least 15 credits in reading instruction.

304. Teacher Load: High School, Junior High School, Middle School and Grades 7 and 8 Budgeted at High School Rates

- (1) High schools and junior high schools shall employ at least four full-time equivalent certified teachers (including library and guidance personnel) in addition to the administrator of the school.
- (2) Middle schools and grades 7 and 8 budgeted at high school rates with 60 or more students shall employ at least three full-time equivalent certified teachers (including library and guidance personnel) in addition to the administrator of the school.
- (3) Grades 7 and 8 budgeted at high school rates with less than 60 students shall employ two and one-half full-time equivalent certified teachers (including library and guidance personnel) in addition to the administrator of the school.
- (4) Individual class size shall not exceed 30 students, except where schools are experimenting and have the approval of the state superintendent. Physical education and typing classes may have 45 students. Class size limits do not apply to instrumental music or choral groups.

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that the proportion of teachers certified at elementary or secondary levels shall not be less than one third at either level.

The board of public education recommends that all teachers provide instruction and reinforcement in reading, spelling and grammatical skills for the subject or course they are teaching.

School districts should provide inservice opportunities for all teachers to ensure professional competency to teach reading skills in the assigned subject or course.

300. PERSONNEL

Minimum

- (5) No teacher shall have more than 28 clock hours of assigned student responsibility per week.
- (6) The number of students assigned a teacher per day shall not exceed 160. Typing and physical education classes shall be counted at two thirds of the actual enrollment. Study hall, regardless of size, shall be counted at 15 students. Student limits do not apply to instrumental music or choral groups. Library, guidance and study hall duties are assigned student responsibilities. However, in cases where a teacher is assigned full-time in these areas, the assignment may be for the entire day.

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that English teachers shall not be assigned more than 125 students per day, or they shall have the services of para-professionals.

305. Teacher Load: Elementary Schools

- (1) In multi-grade classrooms, the maximum class load shall be as set forth below:
 - (a) Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, and 3: 20 students.
 - (b) Grades 4, 5, and 6: 24 students.
 - (c) Grades 7 and 8: 26 students.
- (2) Multi-grade classrooms that cross grade level boundaries (e.g., 3-4, 6-7) shall use the maximum of the lower grade.
- (3) In single-grade rooms, the maximum class load shall be as set forth below:
 - (a) No more than 24 students in kindergarten.
 - (b) No more than 26 students in grades 1 and 2.
 - (c) No more than 28 students in grades 3 and 4.
 - (d) No more than 30 students in grades 5 through 8.
- (4) In one-teacher schools, the maximum class load shall be 18 students.
- (5) No teacher shall have more than 28 clock hours of assigned student responsibility per week except for one- and two-teacher rural schools.

The board of public education recommends that the certified staff should be supplemented by para-professionals.

The board of public education recommends that in single-grade rooms, the maximum class load should be as set forth below:

- (a) No more than 22 students in kindergarten.
- (b) No more than 20 students in grade 1.
- (c) No more than 24 students in grade 2.
- (d) No more than 26 students in grades 3 and 4.
- (e) No more than 28 students in grades 5 through 8.

The board of public education recommends that during the regular 6-hour teaching day, each teacher should have 45 minutes of preparation and planning time. This time should be in addition to any regularly scheduled recess and lunch period. During this 45-minute period, the teacher should be free of any direct responsibility for students.



400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

A program of instruction for students is the central reason for the school's existence. Every policy, activity and decision carried out by the board of trustees, the administrative personnel and the teaching staff should be directed toward strengthening that program.

Schools are urged to take advantage of all appropriate educational resources within the community to assure that the educational program for each student is related to the student's needs and relevant to life within the community.

The accreditation standards outline a minimum instructional program. Schools are urged to consider this program as a starting point from which they can expand course offerings to meet the increasingly specialized needs of students and society.

A district must formulate precise and realistic goals for its educational program. These goals will flow primarily from the stated educational philosophy of the district, but they also should take into account the particular aspirations, interests and abilities of students.

A major resource for curricular activities is the school library. In these standards, the term "library" includes instructional media centers, communication centers, or other titles used to describe this resource. An effective curriculum must be reinforced by a quality library and resource center. Teachers cannot be expected to remain completely abreast of the changes, reinterpretations and discoveries occurring daily in all fields of knowledge. Students and teachers, therefore, must have access to a well-stocked library which contains a core of reference books, fiction, periodicals, maps and other educational media. The library's resources should be updated and enlarged continuously to reflect the best of modern as well as classical thought.

Library facilities are as vital to the elementary curriculum as they are to middle school, junior high and high school curriculums. In all cases, these resources should reflect a variety of interests, subject areas and reading levels and should be easily accessible. School officials responsible for establishing the daily school schedule must assure that each student's daily schedule includes appropriate time allocations for efficient use of the library facility.

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402. Basic Instructional Program: High School, Junior High, Middle School and Grades 7 and 8 Budgeted at High School Rates.

- (1) Each district shall have in writing and on file a process of program evaluation. Self-review of each program shall occur at least once every ten years, using the Northwest Association evaluation program or evaluative materials of the district's choice.
- (2) A high school shall require a minimum of 16 units for graduation including ninth grade units; however, at its discretion, a board of trustees may require additional units of credit for graduation. A unit of credit shall be given for satisfactory completion of a full-unit course. At the discretion of the local administrator, fractional credit may be given for partial completion of a course.
- (3) A unit of credit is defined as the equivalent of at least 225 minutes per week for subjects without laboratory work and 250 minutes per week for subjects that require laboratory work.
- (4) The following is a list of alternative procedures for earning credit. They are acceptable equivalents to the basic definition of a unit of credit. Such units of credit taken with the approval of the Montana high school in which the student was then enrolled and appearing on the student's official transcript, must be accepted in any Montana high school.
 - (a) Satisfactory completion of the content of a course in a period of time either shorter or longer than that normally required. Criteria for successful completion shall be developed as a guide for teachers, students and parents in assuring quantity and quality of performance, regardless of time involved.
 - (b) In accordance with the policies of the local board of trustees, credit earned in summer classes may be applied toward graduation requirements if the summer classes are taught by properly certified teachers. This credit shall be prorated in accordance with the policies of the local board of trustees.

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- (c) Satisfactory completion of special courses in such programs as Job Corps, Upward Bound and Armed Forces schools. Credit given for satisfactory completion of such courses shall be in accordance with policies of the local board of trustees.
 - (d) Satisfactory completion of unconventional programs such as work study, cooperative work experience, college level courses taken in high schools and others. Work study and work experience programs shall be coordinated with the supervision of a certified teacher.
 - (e) In accordance with the policies of the local board of trustees, a regularly enrolled student may apply toward graduation credits earned through the National University Extension Association or earned through one of the schools approved by the National Home Study Council.
 - (f) In accordance with the policies of the local board of trustees, credit earned in adult education classes may be applied toward graduation requirements, provided the classes have been established in accordance with state law and provided the classes are taught by properly certified teachers employed by the school district.
- (5) Course requirements for graduation are:
- (a) Language arts: 4 units.
 - (b) American history: 1 unit.
 - (c) American government: $\frac{1}{2}$ unit. A 2-unit course in American history and American democracy, which includes a study of government, may be used to meet the American history and government requirements.
 - (d) Mathematics: 2 units.
 - (e) Laboratory science: 1 unit.
 - (f) Health and physical education: 1 unit. A school must offer at least a two-year program of physical education and specific instruction in health, the content to be adjusted to provide for earning one unit of credit during the two-year period.

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

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Students must take health and physical education for two years. Participating in interscholastic athletics cannot be utilized to meet this requirement.

- (g) The board of trustees shall require the development and implementation of processes to assist staff members in assessing the educational needs of each student. Local boards of trustees may waive specific course requirements based on individual student needs and performance levels. Waiver requests also shall be considered with respect to age, maturity, interests and aspirations of the students and shall be in consultation with parents or guardians.
- (6) Units of credit earned in any Montana high school accredited by the board of public education shall be accepted in all Montana high schools.
- (7) In accordance with the policies of the local board of trustees, students may be graduated from high school with less than four years enrollment.
- (8) The basic instructional program for each high school shall be at least 16 units of course work which shall include at least those given below:
 - (a) Language arts: 4 units. The basic minimum program in the four skills of communication (speaking, listening, reading and writing) is required each year.
 - (b) Social sciences: 2 units.
 - (c) Mathematics: 2 units.
 - (d) Science: 2 units.
 - (e) Health and physical education: 1 unit. A school must offer at least a two-year program of physical education and specific instruction in health, the content to be adjusted to provide for earning one unit of credit during the two-year period. Students must take health and physical education for two years. Participation in interscholastic athletics cannot be utilized to meet this requirement.

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that physical education classes should emphasize lifetime sports and minimize the type of sports played in interscholastic athletics.

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

- | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Recommended</i> |
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| <p>(f) Fine arts: 1 unit. Fine arts include music, art, drama.</p> <p>(g) Practical arts: 2 units. Practical arts include home economics education, industrial arts, business education and agriculture.</p> <p>(h) Two electives.</p> | <p>(f) Fine arts: 1 unit. Fine arts include music, art, drama.</p> <p>(g) Practical arts: 2 units. Practical arts include home economics education, industrial arts, business education and agriculture.</p> <p>(h) Two electives.</p> |
| <p>(9) Basic instructional program for junior high school, middle school, and grades 7 and 8 budgeted at high school rates must offer:</p> | |
| <p>(a) Language arts: 3 units in junior high and 2 units for middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(b) Social sciences: 3 units in junior high and 2 units in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(c) Mathematics: mathematics offerings are to include both algebra and general math in grade 9, 3 units in junior high and 2 units in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(d) Science: 3 units in junior high and 2 units in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(e) Health and physical education: ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(f) Art: ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(g) Music: ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(h) Practical arts (includes home economics, industrial arts, business education and agriculture) ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> | <p>(a) Language arts: 3 units in junior high and 2 units for middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(b) Social sciences: 3 units in junior high and 2 units in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(c) Mathematics: mathematics offerings are to include both algebra and general math in grade 9, 3 units in junior high and 2 units in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(d) Science: 3 units in junior high and 2 units in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(e) Health and physical education: ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(f) Art: ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(g) Music: ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> <p>(h) Practical arts (includes home economics, industrial arts, business education and agriculture) ½ unit each year in junior high and ½ unit each year in middle school and 7th and 8th grades.</p> |
| <p>(10) A unit is defined as the equivalent of at least 225 minutes per week in non-laboratory courses and 250 minutes per week in courses that require laboratory work. Units in grade 9 shall be equivalent to units of credit for high school graduation requirements.</p> | |

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

Minimum

Recommended

403. Basic Instructional Program: Elementary

- (1) An elementary school shall have a minimum educational program that includes the subject areas listed below:
 - (a) Language arts including reading, literature, writing, speaking, listening, spelling, penmanship and English.
 - (b) Arithmetic, written computation and problem solving.
 - (c) Science, ecology and conservation.
 - (d) Social sciences, including geography, history of the United States, history of Montana, agriculture and economics. Contemporary and historical traditions and values of American Indian culture may also be included.
 - (e) Fine arts, including music and art.
 - (f) Physical education.
 - (g) Safety, including fire prevention as outlined in state statutes.
 - (h) Health education.
 - (i) Weekly time allotments for each subject area are flexible; however, in grades 1, 2 and 3, the standard school day must consist of at least four hours. In grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, the standard school day must consist of at least six hours. Daily time allotments do not include time allotted for the lunch period, and time allotments should be scheduled to give balance to the educational program. One recess period per day may be counted toward the standard school day if a planned activity is provided during the recess. Passage time between classes may be counted toward the standard school day.
- (2) Basic instructional course material or textbooks in the fundamental skill areas of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies must be reviewed by school district personnel at intervals not exceeding five

The board of public education recommends that, in developing a daily or weekly schedule, time allotments should be flexible for meeting the individual needs of children since all children do not need exactly the same amount of time in each subject area every day. Every teacher should prepare a daily or weekly plan of instruction.

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

Minimum

years. All instructional materials must be sequential and, in addition, must be compatible with previous and future offerings.

Recommended

The board of public education encourages schools to offer family life and human sexuality programs for all grades K-12. The goal of such programs is to develop in concert with parents, churches, community organizations, and youth, sources of information and discussion which will help students confront the physiological, psychological, social, and ethical implications of human sexuality.

Specific goals should be clearly explicated for each locality and should include information which will assist young people in understanding and integrating into their lives self-respect, mutual respect, consideration of the needs of others, affection and love, variety of family structures and roles of family members, male and female roles in society, communication skills, peer relationships, clarification of personal values and goals, and the consequences and implications of behavior.

404. Library Media Services, K-12

- (1) All schools shall have a centralized catalog of all the instructional media in the school, exclusive of textbooks. This collection shall include all the print and nonprint materials as well as supporting audiovisual equipment and shall be accessible to students and teachers.
- (2) Each school district shall have written policies regarding the selection, use and evaluation of materials and services and procedures for handling challenged materials. The selection and use of specific items of material, with the advice of the staff, are the responsibility of the local school board.
- (3) In high schools, junior high schools, middle schools and 7th and 8th grades funded at high school rates, the full-time or part-time librarian shall have a teaching certificate with a library endorsement.
 - (a) In schools of 100 or fewer students, the librarian shall devote a minimum of 1 ½ hours or 2 periods per day in the library.
 - (b) In schools of 101 to 300 students the librarian shall spend a minimum of 3 hours or 3 periods per day in the library.

The board of public education recommends that all schools shall have centralized all the instructional media in the school, exclusive of textbooks. This collection should include all the print and nonprint materials as well as supporting audiovisual equipment and shall be accessible to teachers and students. This collection should be organized according to accepted library practice and shall be readily available to the students.

Policies should be reviewed annually by the school board and made available to employees and patrons of the school district.

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

Minimum

Recommended

- (c) In junior and senior high schools of 301 to 500 students, the librarian shall spend full-time in the library. One library aide shall be employed for each librarian, or the services of a student librarian or volunteer aide shall be available.
- (d) Junior and senior high schools of 501 students shall have a full-time librarian and additional librarians at the following ratio:

<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>Librarian</i>
501 to 1,000	1.5
1,000 to 1,500	2
1,500 to 2,000	2.5
2,000 to 2,500	3

One library aide shall be employed for each librarian, or the services of a student librarian or a volunteer aide shall be available.

- (4) Elementary schools with four or more teachers must assign a teacher with a minimum of nine credit hours in professional library training at a ratio of one full-time librarian to 800 students or a minimum of one hour per day, whichever is greater. In school districts employing a certified teacher with a library endorsement, a trained para-professional under the direct supervision of this librarian may be employed to meet this requirement.
- (5) The library media collection shall include instructional items in numbers sufficient to meet staff and student needs. (Instructional items refer to all print and nonprint media owned by the school district including reference materials, periodicals, newspapers and materials held in the district instructional media centers.) The items shall be selected to represent as nearly as possible all areas of the curriculum at the appropriate reading level and interests of the students.
- (6) After a school library has assembled the minimum collection, the annual expenditure for the library collection, exclusive of textbooks and audiovisual materials, must meet the minimum expenditures given below:

The board of public education recommends that after the school library has once assembled the minimum collection, the annual expenditure for books and periodicals, exclusive of textbooks and audiovisual materials, should meet the minimum expenditures given below:

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

Minimum

Funding: high school, junior high school, middle school and 7th and 8th grades funded at high school rates:

50 or fewer students	\$ 900
51-100	1,440
101-200	1,800
201-500	3,600
or \$9 per student, whichever is greater.	
501-1,000	5,400
or \$7.20 per student, whichever is greater.	
1,001-1,800	7,200
or \$6.30 per student, whichever is greater.	
1,800 +	10,800
or \$5.40 per student, whichever is greater.	

A minimum of \$1.80 per student shall be expended for media software.

Funding: Elementary

300 or fewer students—\$8.10 per student or \$180, whichever is greater.
Over 300—\$2,430 plus \$4.50 per student over 300 enrollment.

A minimum of \$1.80 per student shall be expended for media software.

- (7) The staff shall provide students with instruction in the use of the media.
- (8) Provision shall be made for work areas and individual study areas for viewing, listening and recording.
- (9) The library shall be open on all instructional days for student and teacher use during all periods of the school day as well as immediately preceding the following regular school hours.

406. Guidance and Counseling, High School, Junior High School, Middle School and 7th and 8th Grades Funded at High School Rates.

- (1) Each full-time counselor and part-time counselor shall have a valid Montana teaching certificate and have at least 30 quarter (20 semester) hours preparation in guidance. (Effective for the 1986-87 school year, a counselor will need an endorsement based on a minimum of a minor and three years experience as a certified classroom teacher.)

Recommended

Funding: high school, junior high school, middle school and 7th and 8th grades funded at high school rates:

50 or fewer students	\$ 1,440
51-100	2,160
101-200	2,700
201-500	5,400
or \$12.60 per student, whichever is greater.	
501-1,000	8,100
or \$10.80 per student, whichever is greater.	
1,001-1,800	10,800
or \$9 per student, whichever is greater.	
1,800 +	16,200
or \$7.20 per student, whichever is greater.	

The board of public education recommends that a minimum of \$5.40 per student should be expended for media software.

The board of public education recommends that a minimum of \$5.40 per student should be expended for media software.

The board of public education recommends that the library should be made available for use by students, staff and the general public in the evenings and at other times when such use does not conflict with the regular instructional program.

400. SCHOOL PROGRAM

Minimum

- (2) A minimum equivalent of one full-time counselor for each 400 students shall be provided. All schools must have a counselor assigned for at least one hour a day or five hours per week.
- (3) A separate room specifically designed for guidance and counseling shall be provided.
 - (a) Adequate space and facilities for clerical assistance shall be provided.
 - (b) A guidance library shall be provided which is available to all students.

407. Guidance and Counseling: Elementary

- (1) Guidance and counseling services shall be provided.

408. Reading Specialist

Recommended

The board of public education recommends that a minimum equivalent of one full-time counselor for each 300 students shall be provided. All schools should have a counselor assigned for at least one hour a day.

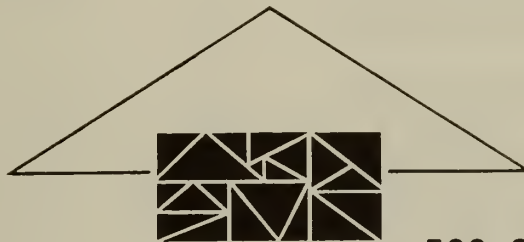
The board of public education recommends that a room or rooms wherein counselors may conduct testing, group guidance or small conferences should be provided.

The board of public education recommends that all schools should provide a developmental guidance program.

A full-time reading specialist for each district with a minimum of 300 students (K-12) should be provided.

409. Student Follow-Up

Montana high schools should conduct follow-up studies of all graduates and non-graduates grades 9-12. The results of such studies should be incorporated into the curriculum development process and should be shared with staff and school constituents.



500. SCHOOL FACILITIES

The primary duty of a district with regard to school facilities is to safeguard the health and well-being of the children enrolled in its schools. The Montana State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences has published *School Environment Guide, Law and Regulations*, which outlines the minimum health and safety standards for Montana school structures.

In addition to sufficient classroom space, a quality educational program needs facilities for science, music, art, vocational education and guidance programs. Adequate recreational facilities are necessary to provide students the opportunity to develop physical as well as mental skills.

The environment offered by the school plant has a direct effect on the tone and spirit of the school. Bright, well-designed and well-maintained buildings make a positive contribution to a student's attitude toward school.

As with other components of the educational program, school facilities should reflect, insofar as possible, the district's total educational philosophy.

500. SCHOOL FACILITIES

Minimum

Recommended

502. Site and Grounds

- (1) The area must be of sufficient size to provide adequate space for school facilities and activities and must be located so as to conform to state and local building requirements.
- (2) New and remodeled schools must comply with requirements outlined in the Public Accommodation and Consumer Safety section of Title 16, Chapter 10, Sub-Chapter 11 of the Administrative Rules of Montana.

500. SCHOOL FACILITIES

Minimum

Recommended

503. School Plant and Facilities

- (1) The school plant and facilities must be adequate for the number of students enrolled and for the curriculum offered. Facilities must be constructed and equipped to safeguard health and to protect students and staff against fire and other hazards. The local board of trustees or other designee shall review annually plant and facilities in cooperation with the local fire chief and the county sanitarian where such offices exist.
- (2) All high schools, regardless of enrollment, must have at least four general classrooms in addition to a study hall and a library. All rooms shall be neat, clean, well lighted, attractive and adequately heated and ventilated.
- (3) Schools must provide a special room with the necessary equipment for emergency nursing care and first aid.
- (4) Lunch rooms shall meet state standards for food handling establishments and the standards established by the superintendent of public instruction. (See Food Service Establishment Rules in Title 16, Chapter 10, Sub-Chapter 2 of the Administrative Rules of Montana.)
- (5) New construction, enlargement or remodeling of any building to be used for public school purposes must be approved by the superintendent of public instruction and the Building Codes Division of the Department of Administration, which has the responsibility of coordination with other state agencies.
- (6) The furnishing and equipping of the school building shall be sufficient in quality and quantity to support a quality educational program. Hygienic requirements and adaptability to various school and classroom activities should be carefully considered in the selection of school equipment and materials. Adequate storage space, convenient to classrooms, should be provided for equipment and materials.
- (7) All new or remodeled buildings shall be equipped with at least a class "C" fireproof vault adequate to handle school and student records.

500. SCHOOL FACILITIES

Minimum

Recommended

- (8) A flag of the United State of America shall be displayed in accordance with state law. The Montana state flag must be properly displayed in an appropriate location in the building.

504. Maintenance

- (1) The school grounds and buildings must be maintained in such manner so as to assure the health and safety of students and staff.
- (2) Custodial service and heating, lighting, ventilation, water supply and lavatories shall be such as to assure hygienic conditions for students and staff. Standards of the Public Accommodation and Consumer Safety section of Title 16, Chapter 10, Sub-Chapter 11 of the Administrative Rules of Montana must be met.

505. Safety

- (1) Fire drills should be conducted in accordance with state statutes.
- (2) Precautions for protection against disasters such as blizzards, fires, floods, earthquakes, bomb threats, or nuclear disasters must be taken throughout the buildings and grounds.
- (3) Safety precautions must be taken for the protection of students and staff against injuries in all buildings and on all grounds, particularly on playgrounds and in laboratories, shops and gymnasiums. Special provision must be made to protect students while operating power machinery.
- (4) Gas supply lines serving science laboratories, home economics rooms, shops or other rooms utilizing multiple outlets shall have a master shut-off valve that is readily accessible to the instructor or instructors in charge.
- (5) Home economics rooms, shops, offices and other rooms using electrically operated instructional equipment shall be supplied with a master electric switch readily accessible to the instructor or instructors in charge.

